



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Southwestern
Region

517 Gold Avenue SW.
Albuquerque, NM 87102-0084

Reply to: 3410

Date: July 10, 1990

Subject: White Pine Blister Rust Alert

To: Forest Supervisors
Area Forester, BIA, Pheonix
Area Forester, BIA, Albuquerque
Area Forester, BIA, Navajo Area Office, Window Rock

White pine blister rust infections have recently been discovered on southwestern white pines near Cloudcroft, New Mexico. This discovery was made and verified this past March by Dr. Frank Hawksworth, Research Forest Pathologist at the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station. Additional infections have subsequently been noted on southwest white pines throughout much of the mixed conifer type on the Lincoln National Forest, and we expect others will be found on adjacent Mescalero Apache lands.

It appears this disease was introduced to the Cloudcroft area about 15 to 18 years ago, but has gone unnoticed until now. It may also be present, but undetected, in other parts of the Region. Therefore, we are asking you to pass this information on to your field going personnel and District Offices, and ask them to notify us if they observe any of the following symptoms on southwest white pine: Reddish copper-colored needles giving a "flagging" appearance on one or more branches; branch swellings (cankers); branch swellings with honey-colored to brownish drops of liquid exuding from the swollen area in August; or branch swellings containing white blisters and/or orange-colored spores in the spring and early summer.

Little is known about how this disease will progress, or how it will affect management options in the Southwest. However, we do know that it can be particularly destructive to white pines and southwest white pine has been shown to be very susceptible to this disease. Once introduced to an area, it can spread rapidly. Infected seedlings and saplings are quickly killed, while larger infected trees may last up to 20 years before they succumb.

If you have any questions regarding this disease, or detect symptoms which might indicate its presence on your forest, please contact Borys Tkacz, Arizona Zone Leader, Forest Pest Management, at (602) 527-7377, or Dayle Bennett, New Mexico Zone Leader, Forest Pest Management, at (505) 842-3190.

/s/ Douglas L. Parker

DOUGLAS L. PARKER
Deputy Director of State and Private
Forestry and Forest Pest Management

cc:
AZ Zone
NM Zone



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